

**Tikrit University**  
**Collage of Education for Humanities**  
**English Department**



**Research paper**

**Third Year**

**Format Conventions**

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## **Chapter 8: Format Conventions**

Convention of format in writing have to do with spacing, margins, and other related minutiae/details that usually have little to do with the substance of paper but that can have a lot to do with a reader's reaction to it. (It is an agreement in writing a research paper the shape, the size of writing, page margins on all size (top, bottom, left.....)).

writing, and presenting scientific research papers. These conventions play a crucial role in ensuring clarity, consistency, and professionalism in academic writing. Adhering to proper format conventions helps readers understand the research easily and allows academic institutions to evaluate research work according to unified standards.

### **Importance of Format Conventions**

Format conventions are essential in scientific research for several reasons. First, the readability and comprehension for readers, including instructors and examiners. Third, they ensure academic integrity by clearly distinguishing between the researcher's ideas and cited sources. Finally, format conventions give research papers a professional appearance and make them suitable for publication or academic evaluation.

### **General Structure of a Research Paper**

Most scientific research papers follow a standard structure, which includes:

- Title Page
- Abstract
- Introduction
- Literature Review
- Methodology
- Discussion
- Conclusion and Recommendations
- References

Each section has specific formatting rules related to headings, spacing, font size, and alignment.

## **Font and Text Formatting**

Academic research papers usually require specific font styles and sizes. Commonly used fonts include Times New Roman or Arial. The standard font size is 12 for the main text and 14 or 16 for main headings. Line spacing is often set to double spacing or 1.5 spacing to improve readability. Margins are typically uniform on all sides of the page, usually one inch (2.5 cm).

Text alignment is generally justified or left-aligned, depending on university guidelines. Paragraphs should be indented consistently, and unnecessary decorative formatting should be avoided to maintain academic seriousness.

## **Headings and Subheadings**

Headings and subheadings are used to organize the content of the research. They should be clearly distinguished by font size or bold style. Main headings are usually bold and centered, while subheadings may be bold and left-aligned. Consistency in heading style throughout the research paper is very important.

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Tables and figures are used to present data clearly and effectively. Each table or figure should be numbered consecutively and provided with a clear title. The title is usually placed above tables and below figures. All tables and figures must be referred to in the text, and their sources should be cited if they are taken from other works.

## **Citation and Referencing Format**

One of the most important format conventions in scientific research is proper citation and referencing. Researchers must follow a specific citation style such as APA, MLA, or Chicago. In-text citations should include the author's name and

year of publication. The reference list must be arranged alphabetically and formatted according to the chosen style. Proper referencing helps avoid plagiarism and increases the credibility of the research.

### Placing Note References in the Text

Here we are concerned with the reference marks (or footnote numbers) in the body of the paper.

1-Number notes consecutively throughout the paper.(do not reuse a number , the fifth note will be numbered 5 even if its content matches exactly that of note number 2)

2-Use Arabic numerals (1,2,3,etc)as a reference marks in the body of the paper.

3-Type each number so it will appear to be raised roughly one-half space above the line---like this<sup>3</sup>---as a superscript figure. Do not space before the number --  
--like this<sup>3</sup>----as and do not embellish the number with slashes, parentheses, periods, or any other marks. However, do put the number after all punctuation but dashes.

4-Always put the number after the material to which it refers.

### Types of quotations

There are two types , short quotation and long quotation.

**Short quotation:** If a quotation will take up four or fewer lines of typing in your paper , it is a short quotation. Here are rules for presenting short quotation:

1-type the quotation along with your own writing , without special indentation or spacing.

2-use quotation marks to enclose your source's exact words.

3-place a footnote number after the quote

material and following all punctuation but dashes.

**Long quotation:** If a quotation would take up more than four lines of typing in your paper ,it is a long quotation. Here are the rules for presenting a long quotation in double- spaced typing:

1-Triple-space before and after the long quotation.

2-Double-space the quotation.

3-Indent the quotation ten spaces from the left margin but retain the normal right margin.

4-Do not use quotation marks unless the passage itself contains a quotation. Then use normal double quotation marks for the quotation within the quotation.

5-Place a footnote number immediately after the quoted material and any following punctuation.

### **Omitted words**

Sometimes you want to omit words in the middle of a quotation because they are irrelevant, simply replace the omitted words with the ellipsis mark ( ... )three spaces dots with a space at the beginning and end. For example:

“on the other hand, some... were not convinced.”

You don't need to use the ellipsis if you are leaving out words at the beginning or at the end of a quotation. If you want to quote the first part of a sentence, omit the end of it, and continue quoting again with the next sentence by placing four dots without spacing before the first one. For example:

“The Americans were outraged...The French were more stubborn this time and held the events anyway.”

If you want to omit a single paragraph, use four dots (one for the period of the sentence you are just ending and three for the omitted paragraph).

If you want to omit more than a single paragraph (and this should highly unusual), indicate the deletion with a full line of spaced dots:

.....  
.....

### **Added words**

Sometimes you need to add an explanation within a quotation so that the quotation will make sense. Use brackets to separate your words from those you're quoting. Do not use parentheses instead of brackets, or your readers may think they are still reading part of the quoted material.